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A MONUMENT TO WASHINGTON IRVING.



ACTORS of America last Spring set up in the Metropolitan Museum a tawdry memorial to an author whose artificial and melodramatic genius makes the source from which his monument sprang exceedingly appropriate. Is it not about time that Americans who honor their native literature presented its loftiest and most amiable exponent with a testimonial that he has not been forgotten in the city of his birth and labors almost before he is a quarter of a century underground? The stage has given Edgar Allan Poe a monument.

Cannot the studio build one for Washington Irving?

If ever man merited a memorial in the most exalted place New York possesses to erect a memorial in, it is Geoffrey Crayon, Gentleman. He belongs to our city as completely as his literature belongs to our soil. From every flight he took abroad he returned to his natal nest to do it honor with his pen, and he laid down the burden of a busy and blameless life almost within hearing of Trinity's chimes. An honest gentleman in life and life's work, he confers a lustre on the land he sprang from, and the literature he did more than any other man to found.

Yet the only honor New York does her gifted son is to make the wholesale pirating of his works profitable, once the copyright upon them has expired. It is a compliment he well deserves, that his works are still sufficiently in demand to be worth stealing. But he deserves more at the hands of a public for whom he has done so much. He deserves substantial representation in a place of honor, where men can point him out with pride and speak his name with reverence and affection.

The fine artistic quality of Washington Irving's genius; his sympathy with the picturesque and the beautiful; the numberless inspirations his pen has furnished for the brush; and, not the least, his intimate personal relations with the artists of his time, render the erection of a memorial to him by the artists of America peculiarly just. Poe was neither an actor or a dramatist, nor was he ever closely associated by profession or ties of friendship with the stage. Yet the actors of America found an excuse for their homage to him in the fact that he was begotten of their profession, in which his parents held a most humble place. The artists of America need not test the elasticity of sentiment so severely in order to extenuate their tribute to the memory of the author of "Rip Van Winkle" and the "Tales of a Traveler." Their excuse is in the man himself, not in his ancestors.

THE ART UNION, on the part of the artists of America, extends its services to the good cause of providing Washington Irving with a fitting monument in the park where Poe and Halleck have already found a reception. We not only extend our services, but we propose to see that the monument becomes an accomplished fact. And we are confident that we shall not be shaken in our belief in the men and women in whose service our labors in journalism are consecrated. What we desire is, that the Irving monument shall be an artists' monument, built by artists, to reflect honor on them, both in its inception and its realization. It must not only be a monument to a man, but a model for popular taste to profit by.

Now let the artists of America be heard from. We have the winter before us, but the time is none too ample. Before the Christmas bells ring out over the snow, we hope to have enrolled upon the list of contributors to the cause the names of all the workers in our studios; nor need their patrons, with the true interests of American art at heart, be diffident of figuring in good company. The roll is open to all, and THE ART UNION Irving Monument Fund may be reached at this office. When we report upon it a month hence, it will be to show the public in round numbers that patriotism and public spirit are alive in other places besides the play-house and the counting-room.

A LOCAL paper, of devotional characteristics, has made an editorial demand for information as to "what good ever came out of whiskey?" About the best thing, artistically considered, that we know of as having "come out of whiskey" in America, is the collection of Mr. William T. Walters. Another pretty good "thing" in the same line is that of Mr. Gibson, of Philadelphia.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY IN BRIEF.

DURING the past three months the mail has brought us a number of inquiries as to the personalities of our artists. As it would be impossible to answer these individually, and as the topic appears to be one of general interest, we will hereafter devote a column to such personal items as our correspondents' letters may call forth. Those who have written us thus far will please take the following paragraphs for answer to their queries. To the many inquiries as to the addresses of the artists, we can only reply that we hope in the next number to open a department of studio cards, which will afford the information desired.

HARRIS, CHARLES X.—Born Foxcroft, Me., 1856. Brought up in Minneapolis, Minn. Went to Europe 1875, and studied under Cabanel. Visited Tunis, traveled on the continent and painted in London. Returned to America 1882. First ex. N. A. D. fall of 1883, S. A. A. 1883. He paints figure genres with spirit and fine finish.

MOELLER, LOUIS.—Born New York, 1856. Worked at decorative painting in this city, and went to Munich in 1875, where he studied under Dietz. Returned to America in 1881. First exhibited N. A. D. 1883. Took first Hallgarten prize at N. A. D. 1884 for picture called "Puzzled." He is a strong draughtsman of the figure and is a master of technique. His detail pictures are remarkable for minute execution and strength, and are highly prized. Elected A. N. A. 1884.

BRIDGMAN, CHARLES.—Born Tuskegee, Ala., 1841. Brother of Frederick A. Bridgman. Practiced lithography 1860. Served through civil war 1861-65. Drew on wood till 1870, and then went to Paris, where he studied under Bonnat. His specialty is the figure.

ALEXANDER, HENRY.—Born San Francisco, Cal., 1860. Seven years in Munich under Loefftz and Lindenschmidt. First ex. Munich, 1879. Returned to America 1883. He paints figure genres, and his "Capmaker at Work," in N. A. D. 1884, attracted attention to him.

VAN BOSKERCK, R. W.—Born New Jersey, 1855. Pupil of A. H. Wyant and R. Swain Gifford. First ex. N. A. D., 1880. His specialty is American pastoral landscape.

COX, KENYON.—Born Warren, Ohio, 1856. Studied art in Cincinnati, at the Philadelphia Academy, and in Paris, 1877-82, under Carolus Duran and J. L. Gerome. Member S. A. A. He is a strong draughtsman of the figure, and paints with considerable force.

COPLEY, JOHN SINGLETON.—Born Boston, Mass., 1737. Began with portraiture, and in 1774, after a visit to Italy, settled in London. In 1783 he was elected a member of the Royal Academy. His portraits were popular and were well and carefully painted. His historical work is formal in composition and not brilliant in spirit. It is best represented by the death of "Chatham," in the National Gallery. Other of Copley's works are "King Charles Ordering the Arrest of the Five Members," the "Death of Major Pierson," the "Assassination of Buckingham," and "King Charles Signing Strafford's Death Warrant." Copley died in London in 1815. His eldest son, under the title Lord Lyndhurst, was Chancellor of England.

DAVIDSON, JULIAN O.—Born Cumberland, Md., 1853. Pupil of M. F. H. De Haas. Made a voyage round the world from 1870-72. Began his active career in art as an illustrator, and first ex. N. A. D. 1873. He has painted a number of historical marines, notably "The 'Constitution' Becalmed Amidst the British Fleet," and "The Battle of Lake Erie." He is a good draughtsman, and his execution is painstaking and correct. His pictures are full of historical interest.

BRADFORD, WILLIAM.—Born New Bedford, Mass., 1827. Educated for business and engaged in it till 1857 at Fairhaven, Mass. Began the study of art without a master, and received instruction from the Dutch marine painter, Van Beest, at Fairhaven. Has made seven voyages to the Arctic regions; spent four years in the practice of art in London, and seven in California. First ex. N. A. D. 1864. Elected A. N. A. 1874. His specialty is marine views, and his best work representations of Arctic sea subjects. His "Coast of Labrador" and "Crushed by Icebergs" are among his most important pictures, many of which are in the great private galleries of England and America.

EVERS, JOHN.—Born Hempstead, L. I., 1797. Came to New York as scene painter at old Park Theatre, under John Joseph Holland. Succeeded H. as artist for 18 years. His work was almost entirely of the scenic and panoramic order, but he developed a great proficiency in portraiture on a small scale, and painted miniatures and landscapes. One of the founders of the N. A. D. in 1826. Died Newtown, L. I., 1884.